

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please add at page 1, after the title, the following new paragraph:

--CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This is a continuation application of allowed parent U.S. Application Serial No. 10/053,548, filed on January 24, 2002, which claims priority to Japanese Patent Application No. 2001-017533, filed January 25, 2001, and the entire contents of the parent application and the Japanese application are incorporated herein by reference.--

Please amend the paragraph at page 6, line 18, to page 7, line 4, as follows:

A first, a second and a third tray 8, 9 and 10 each are loaded with a stack of sheets of particular size. A first, a second and a third pickup device 11, 12 and 13 pay out the sheets from the trays 8, 9 and 10, respectively. A vertical conveying unit [[50]] 14 conveys the sheet fed from any one of the trays 8 through 10 to a position where the sheet contacts a photoconductive drum 15. An image writing unit 57 writes the image data output from the reading unit 50 on the drum 15 with a laser beam to thereby form a latent image. A developing unit 27 develops the latent image with toner for thereby producing a corresponding toner image.

Please amend the paragraph at page 7, lines 11-19, as follows:

Usually, the finisher 100 selectively steers the incoming sheet toward an outlet roller pair 102 or toward a stapler, which will be described hereinafter. Further, the finisher 100 is capable of shifting a switch plate 101 upward in order to discharge the sheet to a usual print tray 104 via a roller pair 103. Alternatively, the finisher [[101]] 100 may shift the switch plate 101 downward in order to steer the sheet to a staple table 108 via roller pairs 105 and 107.

Please amend the paragraph at page 22, lines 20-25, as follows:

If the answer of the step S210 is NO ~~[[of]]~~ or if the answer of the step S220 is YES, then the master machine 500 performs printing in the joint mode together with the slave machine 600 (step S240). On the other hand, if the answer of the step S200 is NO, then the master machine 500 operates in the usual copy mode alone (step ~~[[S240]]~~ S250).

Please amend the paragraph at page 23, lines 1-13, as follows:

FIG. 14 shows the operation of the slave machine 600 relating to the operation of the master machine 500 described above. As shown, the slave machine 600 determines whether or not the joint mode is selected (step S300). If the answer of the step S300 is YES, the slave machine 600 determines whether or not the user stamp set mode is selected (step S310). If the answer of the step S310 is YES, then the slave machine ~~[[6090]]~~ 600 determines whether or not the user stamp is registered thereat (step S320). If the answer of the step S320 is NO, then the slave machine 600 receives the user stamp from the master machine 500 (step ~~[[S320]]~~ S330) and then operates in the joint mode together with the master machine 500.